

## INTEGRATING CULTURE IN INDONESIAN LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR FOREIGN SPEAKERS AT INDONESIAN UNIVERSITIES

Kundharu Saddhono

Sebelas Maret University (INDONESIA)

kundharu.uns@gmail.com

DOI: 10.7813/jll.2015/6-2/58

*Received: 01 Feb, 2015*

*Accepted: 27 Mar, 2015*

### ABSTRACT

Nowdays, Indonesian language becomes one of popular languages in the world. So, efforts to conduct good learning process for foreign speakers are important thing to do. This research was conducted at some universities in big islands in Indonesia that serve BIPA Program. This study is one of the efforts in order teaching materials in BIPA are developed based on wealthy culture in Indonesia. The implementation is integrated with classroom learning, through eight steps, they are: identifying Indonesian themes culture, presenting culture phenomenon in relation with the theme, dialogue target culture profoundly, transition in language learning, language learning with various aspects and its components accordance with the language theories and language learning and its implication in practical communication, verification in target culture perception, building learners culture awareness after passing through a series of activities and searching teaching material and other texts, and evaluating language speak in and culture behave. Through this teaching materials, BIPA learners gained much information about language, culture, and other information that are needed in their communication practices in target language. Teaching materials that are integrated with language elements, language skills, culture dimension, and concrete examples of Indonesian culture practices should be presented comprehensively in learning. Of course, a series of learning activities and culture practices also became an integral part of their process in mastering language competence and Indonesian culture.

**Key words:** Integrated, Indonesian culture, teaching material, BIPA learning, and universities

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language being more acknowledged in international domain. It is proved by the greater number of countries that give Indonesian language as one of languages that were taught in education field, such as Australia, Japan, Dutch, Vietnam, and others. Moreover, Indonesian language belong to top ten popular languages that are learnt in more than 45 countries in the world. Based on The Ministry of Education and Culture in Darmasiswa Program in 2014 there are 650 applicants from 90 countries [1]. It reflects that Indonesian language enthused by others countries, and of course including the culture.

The recent condition of Indonesian language can not be separated from cultural contexts in general. Cultural contexts constitutes relative general contexts that prevailed in our society. [2]. Through this context, language also placed as cultural phenomenon. It meant, language is one of culture elements which also as a tool to express culture values of the society speakers. Understanding of society culture elements became one of important thing in learning certain language, including Indonesian language for Foreign Speakers (Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing - BIPA). So that, in the contexts of BIPA learning, culture aspects must be integrated systematically in learning language so foreign speakers can learn and appreciate behaviors and values of the social culture which are prevailed in Indonesian society.

Culture aspects also became one of the five standards for foreign language mastery, including BIPA, in which the position can not be removed from four other standards. The five standards which must be gained by foreign language learners include: (1) communication, (2) culture, (3) connection, (4) comparison, and (5) communities. By learning Indonesian language, foreign learners will be involved in multilingual and multicultural communities. So, they continuously apply the language learned and enrich it time after time. The ability of integrated speech constitutes one of important abilities that must be mastered by BIPA learners because the learners can receive stimulus in form of sound, and foster them to give responses in many other various skills such as speaking, writing, or motoric responses. But, the availability of enabling integrated language material for BIPA program was not adequate yet, moreover the intercultural and multimedia based learning language integrated material which was integrated with skills of speech and culture behavior.

Multicultural education constitutes a process or education strategy in cultural diversity which included nation plurality, language, ethnic and social group. This multicultural education was directed in realization of knowledge, awareness and culture attitude which considering culture diversity and differences [3]. The aims of multicultural education in BIPA learning are achievement of the intercultural competence including: (1) intellectual understanding, (2) intercultural awareness, and (3) culture behavior skill of BIPA learners. The need of multicultural education was influenced by three major factors: (1) ethnic pluralism constitutes recently developing social reality and it influenced community life; (2) each individual needs knowledge and belief about ethnic and ethnic groups; and (3) the belief and knowledge about ethnic and culture group limits many people perspective and it make something different. [4].

There are five multicultural education dimensions as the important references in developing multicultural based learning, they are content integration, knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equitable pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure [5]. The five dimensions above become a very important orientation in developing BIPA curriculum to achieve educational aims / BIPA learning. The accommodation to the diversity of culture perspectives and ethnic group characteristics in completely multicultural and intercultural learning can be done through various approaches. There are four approaches in developing transformative multicultural curriculum, they are: (1) the contributions approach, (2) the additive approach, (3) the transformation approach, and (4) the social action approach [6].

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in BIPA programs which is held by universities in Indonesia. The problems which were discussed in this study more emphasized in developing learning material. The data examined in this research were qualitative data. Whereas, the sources of the data were: (1) Documents; the documents used in this research were learning material which are used in BIPA Program learning in universities in Indonesia, and sources transcript interview result; (2) Informant; the chosen informants were the BIPA lecturers (- lecturers who teach in BIPA program), and students of foreign speakers. Purposive sampling was employed in consideration that it enabled the researcher to gain complete data in facing reality diversities. Patton states that purposive sampling is the way to choose sample that seasonally adjusted to the problems, needs and researcher steadiness in gaining the data. [7]. As the objects of this research are BIPA Program in universities in Indonesia, which are located in Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Bali, Sulawesi, and Nusa Tenggara Barat. Technique of collecting data was done by examining documents or archives using content analysis. This technique was done to know the form of learning material in BIPA Program in Indonesia. Other technique was interview with lecturers and students. The most common ways to increase data validation is triangulation technique. Triangulation is data validity technique which utilize something out of the data to check or compare with the data [8]. Theories triangulation, method triangulation and informant review were employed in this research. Theory triangulation is using some different perspective theories to discuss the examined problem in order to gain drawing steady and accessible truth of conclusion.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language learning material in this article was limited to its understanding as materials or texts that can be used to facilitate BIPA learning. This learning materials tend to be more informative, instructional, expresional and explorative. Informative materials will help BIPA learners to get some information about language and target culture so cognitively the learners will gain important knowlegde about language and Indonesian culture. More creature learning material will guide learners to practice language in various exercises and tasks. This material will help BIPA learners to master language and culture in various Indonesian language form and language use which were integrated in task- based language learning. More completely expresional learning material consisted of examples and steps of language use in real communication contexts. Through this theory, BIPA learners have adequate exposure for concrete and contextual language use in the area of culture and speakers' community. Meanwhile, more creature explorative material help learners to perform language use exploration in various context of language use. Through this explorative material, BIPA learners were fostered to try various language forms which is seasonally adjusted to the aim, partner and the context of language usage environment, and also implement the culture value which accompany to language use. [9, 10].

In multicultural and intercultural contexts, developing learning material becomes important part and constitutes strategic process because through this punctilious designed material, learners will get various information, both from linguistic aspects and cultural aspect which are integrated inside. [11]. Further, it was exposed the eight cultural integration steps in foreign language learners. Those eight steps were described as follows:

First step is identifying the theme of Indonesian culture. Target culture and source culture themes will become important part to be identified in learning. Various concepts such as kind of jobs, social issues, health, and values were important to be presented in texts which were used. By those texts, learners are faced with problems concerning with the content of the culture and language content to give stimulus in achieving culture behave skills and speak in target language. For examples, giving texts which interrelated with Indonesian culture, such as dances, traditional music, culinary, historic building; culture products such as batik (a dyed fabric), songket woven cloth and so on.

Second step is presenting culture phenomenon interrelated to identify theme which is presented in various pictures, *bulletin board display*, slide, film, video, audio, and written texts. Foreign language learners need to be involved in many activities based on presented phenomenon such as: discussion, debate, interview, presentation, and searching digital sources. In this step, we can display dances video from all sort of Indonesian region, custom wedding, making traditional food and many others. These were already exposed in a research conducted by Saddhono about batik (a dyed fabric) and kimono (Japanese traditional custom) as a culture comparison from two Asian nations. [12].

The third step is dialogue target culture profoundly related to the theme and phenomenon which can be developed, the focuses are: (a) phenomenon description which was presented, (b) theme features analysis, and (c) determining reaction based on culture perspective. The result of the dialog can be in form of written texts which were produced by the learners in target language that embodied of their perception and reaction toward the theme and phenomenon. In this step, the students are given a task to make a report about Indonesian culture phenomenon which has been presented in presenting culture phenomenon step.

Fourth step is language learning transition. Based on texts which were produced by the learners, the next focus lay on the language aspects which are used; such as language function, selected notion, structure, register and vocabulary. In this step, there are two important things which should be considered by the lecturers. First, the lecturers should make the students aware to the close relation between the culture themes and linguistics contents which are used. Second, the lecturers need to integrate grammar from several aspects/unit contextually with culture material. In this step, the students must be able to expose vocabulary concerning with presented culture phenomenon, for example in introducing traditional music instruments so the given vocabulary must relate to traditional music instrument, for example: gong, slendro, pelog, gendhang and so forth. This language use phenomenon also exposed in a sociolinguistics study conducted by Saddhono with foreign students in UNS as the object of the study. [13].

The fifth step is language learning with some aspects and components which are adjusted the language theory and language learning altogether its implementation in practical communication in form of learning reading, listening, speaking and writing. In this step, the accuracy and accurate in speak in the language need to get a serious attention. After knowing much about Indonesian culture, the students are hoped to be able to apply them in four language skills comprehensively. When the students have gained material about Borobudur temple, for instance, the students must write and tell about the story of Borobudur temple based on the material have been read and told by other students.

Six steps, verification in target culture perception. In this step, the learners evaluate and examine various sources using language competences that already mastered to build and modify beginning perception about target culture. In the end of this step, the learners are hoped to be able to manifest their culture perception confidently both linguistically and culturally.

Seventh step is the building of the student's culture awareness after passing through a series of activities and searching teaching material and other texts. The students are hoped to have new culture perception adjusted to culture being learnt during the learning process and after that they are able to practice in speak in the language skill and cultured behave in bahasa dan berbudaya in many different context. This phenomenon have been already described in a study about manuscript analysis "Babad Tanah Jawi" presented by Saddhono [14]

The eight step is evaluating language speaks in and culture behaves. In this step, the student's language and culture competence and performance were evaluated. The focus of the evaluation covers: function, content, structure and fulfillment of the standard which are used. Meanwhile, the focus of culture covers the process of achieving culture aspects in which is manifested in cultural behavior properly and the way they express their culture perception in communication context.

Integrating the aspect of culture in the eight steps mentioning above will guarantee for the fulfillment of BIPA students' culture competence integratedly from cognitive, affective and skill dimension. Culture aspect as content and dynamic process must be integrated contextually with BIPA learning material. The lecturers were responsible for giving stressing material directly involved BIPA learners in various activities which is aimed to master the presented main point of the culture both target culture (Indonesian culture) or other sources of culture and international culture as the comparison. So, learning material in intercultural context should be arranged by considering learning material containing direct instructions the mastery of target culture; learning material as clear and directive map will give overview concerning structured program both linguistically or culturally that must be mastered by the students in a certain period. Learning material should function as adequate source for various kind of appropriate and meaningful information and activities in achieving communicative competence and cultural competence; learning material should become material for the learners to share and give feedback each other; and learning material should reflect target culture and view in which can be a reference for learners/foreign learners in viewing other nations culture. [15]. Based on developing considerations above, BIPA learners are hoped to be able to achieve intercultural competence as a part of integral material in mastering and in speak in skill.

Other considerations in arranging culture-based learning material are proposed by Byram [16] and Kramsch [17, 18]. Culture-content learning material should present intercultural aspects. This presentation was done by presenting the culture sameness and differences in various countries which helped learners to get general outlook about the culture. This intercultural become crucial because learners are hoped consciously or not to differentiate and internalize culture elements existing in texts. The next consideration is the existence of intention and interaction included in texts. Texts, especially authentic text bring intention and connotative meaning and interpretation inside. In this case, the teachers role is teaching culture as what have been mediated; in target language. Authentic texts should be exploited through negotiation or fairly comparison between intended meaning in texts and meaning which is interpreted by learners in the classroom. It is also important to consider diachronic and synchronic from the culture presented in text. It is important to do since culture constitute dynamic subjects as well as language. Language and culture change and transformate time by time. Texts should present information charged culture comprehensively adjusted development in our society. Other important consideration is image representations of culture aspects in learning material. Learning material should perform adequate information concerning history aspect, geography, culture stereotype, custom and tradition, and culture dimension which is not clearly appear but it is believed and existed in community.

The concept of developing and consideration in arranging material above will be manifested if the BIPA learning curriculum framework enable the occurrence of learning process which is completely multicultural and intercultural. Concepts and thinking proposed by Hernandez [19] and *Curriculum Guidelines for Multicultural Education* developed by NCSS *Task Force on Ethnic Studies* [20] can be used as reference to formulate characteristics of multicultural and intercultural based curriculum BIPA learning. BIPA curriculum should reflect culture learning and accommodate diversity learning characteristics and community target. BIPA learning has culture uniqueness and different ethnics characteristics so it must be responded positively in learning material and learning process by giving cooperative activities so they are able to develop positive attitude toward culture and ethnics differences; including the difference of their own culture and target culture. The school or education institutions and instructional program culture in which BIPA is held BIPA learning should be reconstructed and conditioned to reflect culture differences and learning styles from different ethnics and social group. Multicultural and intercultural successfullness always helps BIPA learners to aware and be able to get knowledge, skills, and culture attitude and empower in culture target environment. So, learning material should include culture information, examples of culture skill, and embodied culture attitude being learnt, and trained by learners during learning BIPA.

Multiculture based curriculum should be emphasized on value, attitude and culture behavior which support ethnic's pluralism and culture diversity. This can be accommodated in learning material in which only perform "big" or dominant culture aspects, but also existing culture in the country/nation. Multicultural curriculum should help BIPA learners in understanding and reflecting that culture diversity constitutes integral part from plural life. The implementation of multicultural and intercultural approach can be manifested in various method. Hughes [21] proposes some alternative multicultural learning strategy in learning language and or next second language. There are comparison method, culture assimilator, culture capsule, audiomotor unit or total physical response method, newspaper, projected media and the cultural island. These enable learners to "experience" live in certain culture. Implementations of methods mentioning above can be done variously by adjusting material aims and characteristics which are learnt by BIPA learners.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

BIPA learning constitutes complex process because it involves various related aspects. Cultural, social, and economics aspects become unseparable variable in BIPA learning process and each aspect has their own contribution in determining the success of BIPA learning. Culture and language aspects become core which mainly oriented in achievement. BIPA learners is focused on their attention and learning to master a series of competencies, language skills, and culture skill. To achieve this competence, a series of learning materials accurately, systematically and integratively arranged must be mastered by the students. Through this materials, BIPA learners gain information of language, culture, and other contents which are needed in their practical communication in target culture. Learning material which integrates language elements, culture dimension and concrete examples of Indonesian culture should be presented comprehensively in BIPA learning. Of course, a series of learning activities and culture practices also become integral part in their process of mastering Indonesian language speak in and cultured behave competence.

## REFERENCES

1. <http://www.darmasiswa.kemdikbud.go.id>
2. Levinson, Stephen C. *Presumptive Meaning: A Theory of Generalized Conversational Implicature*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000
3. Saha, Lawrence J. (eds.). *International Encyclopedia of the Sociology of Education*. New York: Pergamon, 1997.
4. Banks, James A. *Multicultural Education: Historical Development, Dimension, and Practice*. *Review of Research in Education*, 1991
5. Banks, James A. *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002: 13-18
6. Banks, James A. *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002: 29-32
7. Sutopo, HB. *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Surakarta: UNS Press, 2006: 56
8. Moleong, Lexy J. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung. PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2004: 178
9. Tomlinson, Brian. (ed.). *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (2nd Edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2011
10. Tomlinson, Brian. "Material Development for Language Learning and Teaching". <http://journal.cambridge.org>. 2012 accessible 16/5/2014.
11. Craford-Lange, Linda., Dale L. Lage. "Integrating Language and Culture: How to Do It". *Theory into Practice*, Vol. 26, No. 4, *Teaching Foreign Language*. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1476837>. 1987: 258-266
12. Saddhono, Kundharu. "The Study of Philosophical Meaning of Batik and Kimono Motifs to Foster Collaborative Creative Industry". *Asian Social Sciences* Vol 10, No. 9. 2014: 52-61
13. Saddhono, Kundharu. "Kajian Sociolinguistik Pemakaian Bahasa Mahasiswa Asing dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing (BIPA) di Universitas Sebelas Maret". *Kajian Linguistik dan Sastra* Vol. 24, No. 2, 2012: 176-186
14. Saddhono, Kundharu. "The Role of Dutch Colonialism in the Political Life of Mataram Dynasty: A Case Study of the Manuscript of Babad Tanah Jawi". *Asian Social Sciences* Vol. 10, No. 15, 2014: 1-7
15. Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. *Cultures of learning: Language classrooms in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2000.
16. Byram, M. *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters. 1997
17. Kramsch, C. *Language study as Border Study: Experiencing Difference*. *European Journal of Education*. 1993, 28(3), 349-358.
18. Kramsch, C. *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998
19. Hernandez, Hilda. *Multicultural Education: A Teacher's Guide to Linking Context, Process, and Content*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall, 2001
20. <http://www.socialstudies.org/positions/multicultural>
21. Hughes, George H. "An Argument for Culture Analysis in the Second Language Classroom". in Joyce Merrill Valdes. *Culture Bound: Bridging the Cultural Gap in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986.